

Amendment No. 1 to HB2227

Ramsey
Signature of Sponsor

AMEND Senate Bill No. 2135

House Bill No. 2227*

by deleting all language after the enacting clause and substituting instead the following:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 37, Chapter 10, is amended by adding the following as a new part:

37-10-601.

(a) There is created the department of children's services oversight committee. The committee shall consist of eighteen (18) members. Nine (9) senators shall be appointed by the speaker of the senate. Nine (9) representatives shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives. Each member appointed shall have a desire to serve on the committee and be committed to improving the lives of Tennessee's children by putting the best interest of each child as the first reason to serve. During the organizational session of each general assembly, the respective speakers shall reappoint or appoint members to serve on the committee. Any vacancies occurring on the committee between organizational sessions shall be filled by the respective speakers in accordance with the guidelines established in this subsection (a).

(b)

(1) The oversight committee shall meet bi-monthly when the general assembly is in session, to monitor the department of children's services and the division of juvenile justice under chapter 5, part 1 of this title, with emphasis on whether the department is accurately and

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adequately accomplishing its goals in meeting the needs of the children and families in this state.

(2) The committee shall elect from its membership a chair, a vice chair, and such other officers as it deems necessary.

37-10-602. The department of children's services oversight committee is authorized to:

(1) Create subcommittees related to its purposes;

(2) Request standing committees of the general assembly, the fiscal review committee, and any agencies or entities of state government to study and report on designated policy matters relating to children and youth;

(3) Conduct public hearings and invite state employees, professionals, and members of the general public to the meetings in order to share information and experiences on the delivery of services to children and families in this state;

(4) Engage committee staff. Current staff of the general assembly shall staff the oversight committee. Nothing in this subdivision (4) shall authorize the oversight committee to hire an executive director or any other staff;

(5) Utilize for technical or professional services, current staff of the fiscal review committee, the council on pensions and insurance, the office of legislative services, the office of legal services, the office of legislative budget analysis, the office of legislative information systems, and any other staff of the general assembly, all of which shall provide technical and professional services to the

oversight committee subject to the approval of the speaker of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives;

(6) Promote interagency cooperation and policy continuity with respect to state initiatives to benefit children and youth;

(7) Undertake appropriate actions to inform state and local officials, and the public at large, of innovative and effective model programs for children, youth, and their families; and

(8) Perform other duties as requested by joint resolution of the general assembly.

37-10-603. The department of children's services oversight committee shall report its findings to the governor and the general assembly annually, or more often if necessary as determined by the oversight committee.

37-10-604. It is the duty of the department of children's services oversight committee to:

(1) Review current state policies on children and youth as reflected by Tennessee statutes, rules, programs, services, and budgetary priorities;

(2) Regularly perform legislative oversight of the department of children's services and the department of human services until services for children and their families have improved to the extent that such oversight is no longer necessary as determined by the oversight committee;

(3) Study the many problems that jeopardize the development and well-being of Tennessee children and youth, including, but not limited to, such persistent, interdisciplinary problems as teen pregnancy, educational underachievement, youth employment, alcohol and drug abuse, delinquency, emotional illness, birth defects, day care, homelessness, child abuse, the

growing impoverishment of children and adolescents, child sexual abuse, and human trafficking of minors;

(4) Define and establish the components, guidelines, and objectives of a comprehensive state policy to ensure and promote present and future health, welfare, and opportunity for all of Tennessee's children and youth;

(5) Identify any Tennessee laws, rules, programs, services, and budgetary priorities that conflict with the components, guidelines, and objectives of a comprehensive state policy to ensure and promote present and future health, welfare, and opportunity for all of Tennessee's children and youth;

(6) Search for any interdepartmental gaps, inconsistencies, and inefficiencies in the implementation or attainment of a comprehensive state policy to ensure and promote present and future health, welfare, and opportunity for all of Tennessee's children and youth;

(7) Identify any new laws, rules, programs, services, and budgetary priorities that are needed to ensure and promote present and future health, including physical, mental, and emotional health; welfare; and opportunity for all of the state's children and youth;

(8) Serve as an in-house informational resource for all members and committees of the general assembly on legislative policy matters concerning children and youth; and

(9) Perform such other activities as are reasonably related to the legislative intent of this part, including, but not limited to, improving public awareness of the special needs of Tennessee's children and youth.

37-10-605.

(a) The commissioner of education shall report at least twice each year to a meeting of the oversight committee concerning the performance of duties

and responsibilities assigned by this part and § 49-1-520 concerning funding recommendations.

(b) The commissioner of children's services shall report at least three (3) times each year, and may be called upon by the committee or subcommittee thereof, concerning the performance of duties and responsibilities assigned by law to the department of children's services.

(c) The department of children's services, the department of finance and administration, the department of human services, and the fiscal review committee shall provide the oversight committee with any information that the oversight committee requires, including, but not limited to, financial information.

37-10-606. In view of the continuing need for legislative oversight of programs and services for children and their families, emphasized by recent concerns regarding the foster care program and the child protective services system, the department of children's services oversight committee shall continue to perform legislative oversight as provided in this part, notwithstanding any other law to the contrary. This section shall not prohibit or restrict the appropriate review, inquiry, or oversight of the department of children's services by any other standing, special, or statutory committee of the general assembly.

37-10-607. The general assembly declares an urgent need to thoroughly study all relevant issues pertaining to the child protective services system. The department of children's services oversight committee shall study the effectiveness of the child protective services system in this state and develop recommendations for its improvement. The oversight committee is authorized to obtain consultation and receive advice in this effort.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law for purposes of making appointments, the public welfare requiring it. This act shall take effect July 1, 2018, for all other purposes, the public welfare requiring it.